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**CITIZEN CORPS PARTNERS WITH AMERICAN  
LEGION AND AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY**

Secretary Tom Ridge has announced a new affiliation between Citizen Corps and The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary to help raise public awareness about the importance of emergency preparedness and volunteer service. Along with Secretary Ridge, Thomas P. Cadmus, National Commander of The American Legion, and Sandi Dutton, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, were present to sign the respective agreements.

"The American Legion and the Legion's Auxiliary devote countless hours to serving their country and their communities," said Ridge. "With the help of these two organizations, the Department of Homeland Security's Citizen Corps will expand its efforts to educate, train and prepare all Americans."

Through these partnerships, American Legion Posts and American Legion Auxiliary Units across the nation will assist in developing local Citizen Corps Councils to involve citizens in preparedness efforts. This affiliation will also focus on engaging America's youth in hometown security, elevating Flag Day as a day of citizenship and emergency preparedness, and providing support to Veteran's Affairs Hospitals in emergency preparedness efforts.

At their 2004 National Convention, The American Legion passed a resolution to become an affiliate of Citizen Corps. National Commander Cadmus pledged the continuing commitment of his organization stating, "Supporting the Department's efforts to engage citizens in hometown security is a

natural fit for The American Legion. Our members have all seen active military duty defending our country and strongly believe in the mission to be prepared on the home front too." Echoing this sentiment, Sandi Dutton, National President of the American Legion Auxiliary, also expressed her support. "The women of the Auxiliary are committed to improving the welfare of the community by helping all citizens be prepared for any emergency."

Citizen Corps is the Department of Homeland Security's nationwide grass-roots effort that actively involves Americans in making communities safer, stronger and better prepared for all emergencies. The American Legion serves as an advocate for American veterans, a friend of the U.S. military, a sponsor of community-based programs for young people, and a spokesman for patriotic values. With 2.7 million members and nearly 15,000 posts worldwide, the American Legion is the nation's largest veterans group. The American Legion Auxiliary is the largest patriotic women's service organization in the world, with nearly 1 million members. The organization sponsors volunteer programs on the national and local levels, focusing on three major areas: veterans, young people and the community.

For more information about Citizen Corps, visit [www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov). To learn more about the American Legion, please visit [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org). For more information about the American Legion Auxiliary, visit [www.legion-aux.org](http://www.legion-aux.org)

**FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S DESK**  
**BY GARY ZULINSKI**

Here it is February already! Seems just like yesterday the Christmas decorations were coming down.

The national office recently named dedicated full time Regional Citizen Corps staff!!! They will be located in the FEMA Regional Offices and report to the Citizen Corps Program Office in DC, within the

Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness (OSLGCP).

Jim Opoka was appointed as the Central Territory Manager and the Michigan contact. This addition will give the states more individual care for Citizen Corps and programs. I have worked with Jim for some time so Michigan Citizen Corps won't skip a beat.

The next CERT Train the Trainer class is scheduled for February 24-25. The announcement and application is posted on the state web site [www.michigan.gov/mcsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc). I still have openings so get your applications as soon as you can as the class fills up quickly.

I recently met with the Michigan Volunteer Defense Force and they are making CERT training part of their basic training. The MIVDF is the former state National Guard that is being renewed and its charge will be Homeland Security. Citizen Corps members may be interested in joining the MIVDF. As I get more information on the MIVDF I will pass it along.

**REMEMBER the BSIR report is due February 21!**

If you have not received BSIR training contact Mark Wesley at 517-333-5023. Don't delay submitting your report, 2004 grant reimbursements will be delayed if the report is not submitted on time.

Homeland Security appropriations will be meeting soon and deciding on the funding for Citizen Corps for 2006. I have submitted the state summary highlighting our achievements.

You will probably tire of me saying this but two things that are critical: document your Citizen Corps achievements especially utilizing your members in WMD and mass immunization exercises. Secondly document the volunteer hours. For each volunteer hour is worth \$17.30 by national standards. This is another way to document the worth of the investment. One county, who has tracked their volunteer hours, almost equaled their grant.

I have had conversations with the IT people from MSP Emergency Management Division and soon all councils will be signing up on E-TEAM, the Emergency Management software program to track all your CERT trained members. Many of you are familiar with this program and it is being tailored for our needs. There will be no cost to the councils to sign on.

I try to attend all your Citizen Corps meetings and I regret that I cannot make all of them but of the ones that I attend I must comment that I am impressed with the progress that each council has made in preparing its community for disasters and Michigan is ahead of most states in having the state and citizens ready for all hazard disasters. KEEP UP THE GREAT WORK!

***What counts is not necessarily the size of the dog in a fight - it's the size of the fight in the dog.***

- Dwight D. Eisenhower 1958

## **SECRETARY RIDGE REVIEWS HOMELAND SECURITY PREPAREDNESS**

Secretary Ridge reviewed the efforts taken by the Department of Homeland Security to increase the level of preparedness in America at the Council for Excellence in Government, "Our efforts at Homeland have been concentrated on the work of the Ready Campaign and the Citizen Corps. Over the past two years, it's not an exaggeration to say that Ready has truly taken off and, frankly, has greatly exceeded our expectations and we've just begun. From coast to coast, 58 percent of Americans have taken at least one step to prepare their homes and their families. Obviously, taking three steps at a minimum, but we've got to crawl before we walk and obviously, we've got to take the first step before we can take the second or third.

We want them to put together that emergency kit, have that communication plan, and just, as a good citizen, stay informed. A great help in spreading the Ready message has been the Citizen Corps with over 1500 counselors delivering the preparedness message to countless communities and individuals. We've made a tremendous start with both of these initiatives, Ready and Citizen Corps, but it's only just a start."

## **NEW NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH DIRECTOR**

Anything that has been around for as long as Neighborhood Watch (NW) has the potential for getting stale if new ideas are not introduced," says Chris Tutko, the new project director for neighborhood Watch/USAonWatch. Tutko's perspective is precisely why generating fresh initiatives and providing incentives for volunteers'

continued involvement are at the heart of his vision. We talked with him about the current status of the NW Project and what he envisions for the future.

At the present time, the NW Project is in the process of securing continued funding from the Department of Justice. This funding will enable the program to reach a nationwide audience and provide volunteers and law enforcement the training, resources, and support they require. However, Tutko does not plan to merely continue the traditions of the past. His vision includes creating an even better, more dynamic NW.

That said, at the top of Tutko's agenda is developing a nationwide curriculum for NW that will feature separate tracks designed specifically for deputies, officers, and citizens.

The NW Advisory Board, which will meet at the upcoming mid-winter conference, as well as focus groups that will convene throughout the country will generate a majority of the ideas that will serve as the foundation for this curriculum.

The goal is for the curriculum to serve as a model that eventually will be used throughout the country to organize NW groups and provide training. Tutko's hope is that the new ideas offered through the curriculum will not only excite existing volunteers, but also encourage new volunteers to join their local NW group.

"All too often, it takes a tragedy for members of a community to recognize the importance of NW and become motivated enough to get involved," explained Tutko, who has witnessed this pattern firsthand as a retired chief of police (Manassas, VA), as well as a former project director for several law enforcement organizations, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

In fact, a decreased crime rate in a community often leads to decreased involvement on the part of community members. Tutko says there's a tendency for complacency and a status quo mentality when this is the case. "Our objective is to create enough excitement about the program that community members will want to get involved solely because of

their interest in the program, and not as a result of a tragic incident or rise in criminal activity." The Terrorism Awareness Component

The catastrophic events of 911 indeed inspired many individuals to become involved with NW. It also forever altered the makeup of the program, introducing terrorism awareness into the mix. The new curriculum will continue to promote the terrorism awareness component, as well as educate NW volunteers and those serving in a professional capacity. "It's been proven that it's the little things that count when it comes to community watch success," said Tutko. "Those who recognize that there's something out of place in their community are often the ones who alert authorities to criminal activity, including potential acts of terrorism, so one of our priorities is providing volunteers with specific information on what they should be looking for"

Not only will the "what" be addressed in the curriculum, but also the "who," as well. "Oftentimes, individuals will see something that they don't think is right and feel they need to report, but they just aren't sure who they should get in contact with," explained Tutko. "Typically, they assume dialing 911 is their best bet. Unfortunately, the dispatcher doesn't usually know exactly how to handle such calls, so it is our intention to provide citizens with names and numbers of those who were specifically trained in the area of terrorism awareness and can ask the right questions, obtain the most valuable information, and ensure that the ball is not dropped on either side." New Tools for 2005

In addition, Tutko says a number of new tools used for terrorism awareness and community watch efforts will be introduced in 2005. Specifically, the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) has commissioned the Criminal Safety Institute (CSI) to develop a NW tool kit for law enforcement professionals and citizens. This resource will contain model agendas and telephone trees that individual groups can simply take off the shelf and customize to meet their specific needs. Within this new tool kit will also be various courses to help organizers develop creative ways for organizing at the grassroots level, generate upbeat meetings, and create enthusiasm for community involvement. Tutko says a variety of media will be used as teaching tools, including videos, brochures, and other print material.

One aspect of the project that will remain unchanged under Tutko's direction, however, is NSA's strong commitment to the NW program. "NSA has been involved with NW long before 911, and will continue to support the efforts of the program in the future," said Tutko. "NW meetings not only provide the perfect platform for sheriffs to share their agendas with the community, but also an opportunity for law enforcement personnel and community members to interact with one another and form relationships that will serve in protecting their communities more effectively."

## VIPS FOCUS SERIES

The **VIPS in Focus** series will address specific law enforcement volunteer efforts and issues. This series supplements the [www.policevolunteers.org/resources/guide](http://www.policevolunteers.org/resources/guide) Volunteer Programs: Enhancing Public Safety by Leveraging Resources. The first edition is titled Advancing Crime Prevention Efforts: Aligning Neighborhood Watch and Volunteers in Police Service. This inaugural edition addresses a central focus for many law enforcement volunteer activities - advancing community crime prevention efforts by building on Neighborhood Watch activities. Upcoming topics include:

- Community emergency response team (CERT) volunteers in law enforcement
- VIPS in state police organizations
- Using volunteers to address the needs of multicultural communities
- Volunteer-supported law enforcement based victim service programs
- Volunteers in university and college law enforcement agencies
- Law enforcement volunteers in smaller police departments

## TRAINING SERIES

The VIPS Program training series is designed for a volunteer coordinator or agency representative who will be responsible for the development and implementation of a law enforcement volunteer program. The training will introduce the VIPS Program and the various law enforcement volunteer resources offered. The VIPS training will be a hands-on experience and provide attendees with the knowledge and skills necessary to implement law

enforcement volunteer program. Trainers are experienced volunteer coordinators, both sworn and civilian.

Online registration is now open. Registrations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. There is no fee to attend and a continental breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Dates and locations:

March 22 New Orleans, LA  
March 24 Atlanta, GA  
April 7 St. Louis, MO  
April 13 Boise, ID  
April 21 Kansas City, MO  
May 5 Denver, CO  
May 11 San Antonio, TX  
May 12 Cleveland, OH  
May 16 Boston, MA  
May 19 Minneapolis, MN  
May 24 Philadelphia, PA  
June 2 San Francisco, CA  
June 9 Albuquerque, NM  
June 15 Seattle, WA  
June 28 Tampa, FL

### Related Links

[www.policevolunteers.org/events/](http://www.policevolunteers.org/events/)

You can download additional information about the VIPS training sessions and register online here.

### Related Files

[www.policevolunteers.org/files/Neighborhood\\_Watch.pdf](http://www.policevolunteers.org/files/Neighborhood_Watch.pdf)

[www.policevolunteers.org/feedback/](http://www.policevolunteers.org/feedback/)

You can sign up to receive an e-mail announcement when a new edition of VIPS in Focus is released.

[www.policevolunteers.org/resources/vipfocus.cfm](http://www.policevolunteers.org/resources/vipfocus.cfm)

VIPS in Focus will be archived on this page.

## MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

### Who can volunteer for the Medical Reserve Corps?

- Practicing, retired, or otherwise employed medical professionals, such as doctors, nurses, emergency medical technicians, pharmacists, nurses' assistants, and others.

- Public health professionals.
- Community members without medical training can assist with administrative and other essential support functions. (CERT Team Members)

### **What do MRC volunteers do?**

It varies, depending on the nature of the needs in the community; MRC volunteers can assist during emergencies and also as needed for public initiatives and ongoing community health outreach and education efforts.

Major emergencies can overwhelm the capabilities of first responders, especially during the first 12 to 72 hours. Medical and other health volunteers can provide an important "surge" capacity during that critical period. They can also augment medical staff shortages at local medical and emergency facilities. In short, communities often need medically trained individuals to fill in the gaps in their emergency response plans and to improve their response capabilities overall.

MRC volunteers also strengthen the overall health of Americans by participating in general public health initiatives like flu vaccination clinics and diabetes detection programs. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona has outlined his priorities [www.medicalreservecorps.gov/index.cfm?MRCaction=Home.Priorities](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/index.cfm?MRCaction=Home.Priorities) for the health of individuals, and the nation as a whole. The overarching goal is to improve health literacy, and in support of this he encourages MRC volunteers to work toward increasing disease prevention, eliminating health disparities, in addition to public health preparedness.

### **What training will I need?**

Emergency preparedness and response is a highly coordinated effort that allows communities to maximize their capabilities during times of extraordinary disorganization and stress. You may already know how to perform some of the medical and health functions we so desperately need. In most cases, your training as an MRC volunteer will focus primarily on learning your local emergency and health procedures, trauma response techniques, use of specialized equipment, and other methods to enhance your effectiveness as a volunteer.

Perhaps the most important part of your training will be learning to work as part of a team. An organized, well-trained MRC unit will be familiar with its community's response plan, will know what materials are available for use, will know its response partners, and will know where its skills can be put to best use and in a coordinated manner.

Find out how to become part of your community's team.

Locate the MRC nearest you

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov/index.cfm?MRCaction=MRCunit.Contact](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/index.cfm?MRCaction=MRCunit.Contact).

## **FIRE DEPARTMENTS ENCOURAGED TO JOIN FIRE CORPS**

Kicked off in December of 2004, Fire Corps is the newest Citizen Corps initiative and a partnership between the National Volunteer Fire Council, the International Association of Fire Chiefs' Volunteer Combination & Officers Section and the International Association of Fire Fighters. Fire Corps is an exciting new program that's ultimate goal is to support and supplement volunteer, combination, and career fire departments through the use of citizen advocates for non-operational related activities. These include fund raising, life safety education, bookkeeping, and many more. The citizens advocates help relieve the burden of these tasks from the front line providers and allowing them to concentrate more on their front line duties.

From King County Fire District 40 in Renton, WA to the Troutville Volunteer Fire Department in Troutville, VA, departments from coast to coast are signing up to be listed on the Fire Corps website so citizens can find them and join. Almost 100 programs have registered in just three weeks. Citizens like Jeff Thorp, from Fairfax County, Virginia searched the web looking for opportunities to help his community and now is the bookkeeper with his local fire department. But the program will only work if a majority of fire departments join, helping supplement their providers and giving as many opportunities as possible to the citizens who want to help.

"Across this nation, we are keenly aware of people with a strong desire to serve their communities and contribute their time and skills to support homeland security, and in particular their local firefighters,"



Chief R. David Paulison, U.S. Fire Administrator said. "When firefighters can stand side by side with citizens in promoting fire prevention and general safety efforts, and are able to invite citizens to assist with non-emergency responsibilities, the overall security and safety of their community is greatly enhanced."

Here at [www.firecorps.org](http://www.firecorps.org) you can learn more about the program, see what departments have already joined, and sign your own department up [www.firecorps.org/fireDepartments/index.cfm?function=register](http://www.firecorps.org/fireDepartments/index.cfm?function=register). There is no cost to join, and all we ask is that you keep your information up to date. Join today and make a new connection to your community while helping your organization.

## RESOURCES:

### Are You Ready?

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

### FEMA Preparation and Prevention Virtual Library

<http://www.fema.gov/library/prepandprev.shtm>

### Building A Disaster Resistant Neighborhood

<http://www.tallytown.com/redcross/drn.html>

### CDC Emergency Training and Response

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/training>

### American Red Cross Community Disaster Materials

<http://www.redcross.org/pubs/dspubs/cde.html>

### CERT: FAQ

<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/CERT/certfaq.asp>

### Take The CERT CHALLENGE!

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/CERT/certchallenge/instruction.htm>

### CERT Resources

[http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc/0,1607,7-137-6116\\_23782-103091--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc/0,1607,7-137-6116_23782-103091--,00.html)

### CITIZEN CORPS

[www.citizencorps.gov](http://www.citizencorps.gov)

### Michigan Citizen Corps

[www.michigan.gov/mcsc](http://www.michigan.gov/mcsc)

### CERT

<http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/CERT>

### Fire Corps

[www.firecorps.org](http://www.firecorps.org)

### MRC

[www.medicalreservecorps.gov](http://www.medicalreservecorps.gov)

### Neighborhood Watch

<http://www.usaonwatch.org>

### VIPS

[www.volunteersinpoliceservice.org](http://www.volunteersinpoliceservice.org)

For more information about Michigan Citizen Corps, contact the Program Director, Gary Zulinski at (517) 241-3867 or [zulinskig@michigan.gov](mailto:zulinskig@michigan.gov).

## WE ALL HAVE A ROLE IN HOMETOWN SECURITY

Citizen Corps asks you to embrace the personal responsibility to be prepared; to get training in first aid and emergency skills; and to volunteer to support local emergency responders, disaster relief, and community safety